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Inventory
for
Manuscript Collection
MS-434

Washburn Brothers Records

Inclusive dates: 1892-1914
Bulk dates: 1898-1914

by
Anastasia S. Weigle
Edited by Nathan R. Lipfert

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Shelf feet: 2
Number of boxes: 2

Accession # 2006.087.01

A PART OF THE W. J. LEWIS PARKER BEQUEST

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ABSTRACT

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Washburn Brothers

Records, 1892-1914 (bulk 1898-1914)

3 half boxes (1 letter size, 1 legal size, 1 oversize— 1 shelf foot)

Ship builders, ship owners, and sail makers of Thomaston, ME.

Three account and dividend books of vessels built and operated by Washburn Brothers, Shipbuilders of Thomaston, Maine, and eight files of sparring/sailmaking notes and dimensions from C. H. Washburn (one of the Washburn brothers), Sail Maker for Washburn-built four- and five-mast schooners.

Bequeathed by Capt. W. J. Lewis Parker in 2006.

MS-434, accession #2006.087.01

Finding aid in repository; folder level control.

Added entries—persons:

Overlock, James
Washburn, Charles H.
Washburn, Edwin P.
Washburn, Francis A.
Washburn, George K.
Washburn, George. S.
Washburn, William G.

Added entries—corporate bodies (including vessels)

C. H. Washburn Bros. Sail Loft
C. H. Washburn Bros & Co.
Washburn Bros. & Co.

Added entries—key terms:

Shipbuilders
Shipbuilding—Thomaston (ME)
Sailmakers
Sailmaking

ACQUISITION

This collection was bequeathed to Maine Maritime Museum from the estate of Capt. William J. L. Parker in November and December 2006.

PROVENANCE

There is no documentation in Capt. Parker's papers that would indicate how or where he acquired account books and papers.

RESTRICTIONS

There are no restrictions on the study or use of these materials.

PHYSICAL CONDITION

The dividend account book has been covered over with canvas and the bind is tight. The ledger is quarter bound leather with a cloth cover and leather corners. Cloth show extensive wear at the fore edge. A large number of pages have been torn out (pp. 51-338) but the binder is intact. The third journal is quarter bound leather with marble paper covers that show wear at the fore edge. The bind is tight. Although all three books have surface dirt and wear, they are all intact and in good condition.

The sail loft papers have the typical surface dirt and minor wear but are considered in good condition.

HISTORICAL NOTES

Washburn Brothers The Washburn brothers (George S., Francis A., Charles H., Edwin P. and William G.) and Mr. James Overlock, who was a native of Waldoboro, established their firm in Thomaston, ME, in 1886. The Washburn brothers were ship builders, ship owners and sail makers. Their vessels were built primarily for the coasting trades.

George H. Washburn (father of the brothers) took over the sail making business from his father, George K. Washburn, who established it back in 1836. Charles took over the sail loft in 1883. C. H. Washburn Sail Maker, was maintained in a three story building,10 (?) x 90 feet, on Knox Street. His sons also worked in this firm; they were born and educated in Thomaston, Maine.

Francis A. Washburn was in the wholesale grocery business in Boston 12 years, entering as salesman and gaining a partnership, being a member of the firm of Spurr, Washburn and Holmes for 12 years. He was selectman of Thomaston for two years. Charles H. was always a sail maker and was president of the Thomaston National Bank. Edwin P. was a salesman for 8 ½ years in the wholesale grocery business in Boston, and

was a trustee of the Savings Bank [Boston? Thomaston?]. William H.[G.?] Washburn was formerly in the wholesale dry and fancy goods, and was connected with Cheney & Co. in Portland for 6 years. He was director of the Thomaston National Bank.

Washburn Brothers also did a good deal of ship repairing as well as ship building, and in this connection mention should be made of the Marine Railway at Port Clyde, carried on by them under the style of the Washburn Marine Railway Company. The Railway was able to accommodate a vessel up to 550 tons. The company maintained a ship-smith and black-smith shop in connection with the Railway, and a steam tow boat, which was also used in their ship yard and along the coast. They also carried on a large general store at Port Clyde, offering general merchandise, including drugs, paints, oils, hardware, clothing, hats, caps, boots, shoes, dry goods, groceries and notions, "quoting the lowest market rates on goods of standard quality."

SCOPE AND CONTENT NOTES

There are three account books. The first is a dividend book dated 1898-1907, in which the profits of each vessel are computed, and records kept of all the dividend checks sent to each shareholder. The vessels listed in this account book were all built by Washburn Brothers. There is a file of loose papers, evidently removed from this volume.

The second book is vessel accounts, dated 1905-1908 showing an account of vessel expenses. The majority of the pages in this book have been torn out, but enough remains of each page to show that they had all been used, with account information written in ink. The index survives.

The third account book dated 1909-1914 shows daily expenses, mostly for vessels. A sheet of blotting paper separates every page.

The sail loft papers , dated 1899-1908, are loose notes of measurements and specifications for the making of spars and sails for various vessels built by Washburn Brothers. Although a few are on stationery headed C. H. Washburn, Sail Maker, most are on stationery for Washburn Brothers, Shipbuilders. This confusion of the paperwork indicates that there was not much separation between the firms.

PROCESSING NOTES

The collection was separated into two major groups: Washburn Brothers, Shipbuilders and C. H. Washburn, Sail Maker. The first series are the three account books - dividends, vessel expenses and daily expenses.

The second series, C. H. Washburn, is organized alphabetically by the vessel name.

ORGANIZATION OF SERIES & DESCRIPTION

MS-434 Washburn Brothers Records, 1892-1914

SERIES I. Washburn Brothers, Shipbuilders (1898-1914): These are the account books—a dividend book, a vessel account book and a day book. The vessels listed in these books were built by Washburn Bros. and evidently operated under their management.

SERIES II. C. H. Washburn, Sail Maker (1892-1904): These are papers with notations, sketches and specifications for sails. The papers are organized in alphabetical order by vessel name.

CONTAINER LIST

MS-434 WASHBURN BROTHERS RECORDS
1892-1914

SERIES I. Washburn Brothers, Shipbuilders

BOX	FOLDER	
[tied up in separate wrapper]		Account Book—Dividends, 1898-1907
1	1	loose papers from account book —Dividends (1899-1908
	2	account book—1904-1909
	3	account book—day book, 1909-1914

SERIES II. C. H. Washburn, Sail Maker

2	1	*Helen Thomas* (Four mast schooner), 1903
	2	*Henry J. Smith* (Four mast schooner), 1903
	3	*James Pierce* (Five mast schooner), [1900]
	4	*Mabel Jordan* (Four mast schooner), 1892
	5	*Margaret Thomas* (Four mast schooner), 1904
	6	*Mary Bradford Peirce* (Four mast schooner), 1904
	7	*R. W. Hopkins* (Four mast schooner), [1896]
	8	*Washington B. Thomas* (Five mast schooner), [1903]